

Zion Lutheran Church & Preschool
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Do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. Galatians 5:13

Christian Freedom

As American patriots, freedom is our highest virtue, and the bald eagle is our icon for freedom. Yet what does it mean to be free? Is it lack of slavery? The ability to do whatever we want when we want? The ability to do as our conscience allows without the hindrance of an opposing force? America is arguably the freest nation in the world, yet there are some who question whether we are truly free. We still have to obey laws, some of which we don't like, so some argue we're not totally free in this sense and thus argue for an anarchical society.

So, what does Paul's "freedom" mean in Galatians? As always, we must consider the context. Earlier, he wrote, "For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery" (5:1). What did Christ set us free from? Is Paul talking of a political freedom from slavery or a spiritual freedom from slavery? Again, we need more context. The theme of Galatians is Paul's contrast between works and faith, so it is one of spiritual slavery. Before faith came, Paul says, "we were held captive under the Law" of God (3:23). In other words, we were enslaved to the Law to do its works in order to be reconciled with God.

But no more. "But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian [the Law], for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith" (3:25-26). And this faith is for everyone regardless of race, socioeconomic status, or gender (3:29). By faith in Christ, you have been set free from the works of the Law and are now free to live as God's holy creatures in Christ Jesus.

By the time we get to Galatians 5, Paul says we should not use this freedom from the Law as an excuse to sin, "as an opportunity for the flesh." This

is called *licentiousness*—the licence to sin without consequences and repercussions. Christian freedom does not mean we have freedom *to* sin but freedom *from* sin; therefore, we are free to love and serve our neighbor. How do you know how to love your neighbor? The Law tells you (the Ten Commandments).

Luther is quite helpful in this regard. In his treatise, *The Freedom of a Christian*, Luther writes the paradox, "A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all" (LW 31:344). To explain this with a metaphor, Luther likens a believer's relationship with Christ to marriage (which is appropriate since the church is Christ's Bride). What the wife has becomes the husband's, and vice versa. In the same way, "the believing soul can boast of and glory in whatever Christ has as though it were its own, and whatever the soul has Christ claims as His own" (LW 31:351). In short, our wickedness is imputed to Christ and His righteousness is imputed to us—Christ's righteousness becomes ours and our sins became Christ's on the cross (we call this *justification by faith*). Because of this union we have with Christ, Christians are "a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none." Not to sin, death, or the devil.

On the other hand of the paradox, "A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all." In the corpus of Luther's writings, he writes that faith is active in love. In this treatise, Luther wrote how the Christian is free from sin because of Christ and how the Christian is to live in relationship with his neighbor. Herein, then, lies the paradox: *the Christian is free from serving sin and the devil and simultaneously free to graciously love and serve*

his neighbor. Just as Christian freedom means we are not free *to* sin but free *from* sin, so by faith we are also free *to* love our neighbor, not free *from* loving our neighbor. Like it or not, freedom always comes with boundaries. A parent may give their child the freedom to play outside but only within the boundaries of their curfew. Whereas their friend might have no curfew, and they view this as a greater freedom, little do they know that the boundary their parent has set on their freedom is for their own good. Similarly, we are free from the Law as a means to acquiring favor with God, yet this freedom does not give us “freedom” to do whatever the whims of our flesh dictate. Rather, this freedom from the Law paradoxically frees us to love and serve our neighbor just as Christ loves and serves us (see Galatians 5:16-24).

Therefore, as we launch fireworks and lighten the night skies to celebrate our American independence this July, let us evermore place ourselves into the lives of those in our community to love them as Christ has loved us, that they may be enlightened by the Light of Christ. “For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’” (Galatians 5:14).

Pastor “Ricky” Beckett

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Summer has arrived! Summer Camp has begun and is in full swing. Water Wednesdays still appears to be a favorite of all our campers. Summer Camp will be closed July 4-8. We will return July 11 where we will join Zion’s Vacation Bible School in the mornings.

Registration is still open for Fall preschool; however, we have very limited space. The toddler room and three-year-old preschool is wait-list only. The four-year-old class has limited availability on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. Please share the news with friends and family.

Fall enrollment forms and last month’s tuition payment will be due August 1. First month’s tuition should have been paid by May 15. Please contact the office with any questions. Fall Preschool begins August 22 and our Open House/Meet the Teachers has been scheduled for August 18. Praying you all are enjoying a safe and relaxing summer.

Christina Roe

Vacation Bible School
July 11-15



Vacation Bible School is finally HERE!

What an exciting week at Zion!

All children ages 4 -12 are welcome and encouraged to join us. Parents, bring your children to Zion for what will be a fun and rewarding experience. Registration forms are on the table outside the library at Zion, or call the church office, 772-1516.

There is also still time for you to offer to help. Even a day or two would be appreciated. From crafts, recreation, snacks, music, there are many options. Feel free to contact me at (989) 621-5855 with any questions. Thank you, Cori Bingham



Zion Homecoming Sunday
September 11

Mark your calendars for this annual celebration!

Both services will be held at Zion on September 11 with a potluck meal following the 11:00 a.m. service. There will be all kinds of games and activities for the children. Stay tuned to future bulletins and newsletters for more details!

STEWARDSHIP

Monthly Income & Expense Report
through May 31, 2022

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
YTD Budgeted Expenses	\$ 218,007.60	\$ 196,551.10
YTD Actual Expenses	<u>\$ 279,895.94</u>	<u>\$ 187,616.56</u>
YTD Balance	(\$ 61,888.34)	(\$ 8,934.54)
YTD General Fund Income	\$ 266,574.99	\$ 209,148.12
YTD Actual Expenses	<u>\$ 279,895.94</u>	<u>\$ 187,616.56</u>
YTD Income Less Expense	(\$ 13,320.95)	\$ 21,531.56

New Testament Standard Giving

Whenever the topic of stewardship and giving comes up, the conversation inevitably turns to the question: “How much should I give?” Answers will vary because the motive behind such questions vary also.

Sometimes the motive behind asking this question is for self-justification. Even though as Lutherans, we know that we are not saved by our works but by grace through faith because of Jesus’ substitutionary atonement. Yet the natural religion of fallen man is to earn God’s favor by what we do.

Take for example the response of our Lord to the rich young ruler who asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus first tells him to keep the commandments. The rich young ruler responds by indicating that all this he has kept from his youth. But Jesus tells him that he lacks one thing: He must sell all that he has and give it to the poor and then follow him. This rich, young ruler went away sad because he was quite wealthy and could not part with his possessions.

Here we see that those who seek to justify themselves by their giving will hear a response that intensifies the duty that God places upon them. Indeed, they will hear a response that makes it impossible to win God’s favor by their works.

But to those who genuinely desire to know what their duty is, as Christians, in the arena of giving, we look to the Bible for our answer. We believe that the Bible is the Word of God. And we know that the Word of God has been “breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16–17).

So, we begin to answer the question, “What should I give?” with the question, “What does the Bible say about how much we should give and to whom?”

The Old Testament is explicit. The expectation is that the people of God would give a tithe, that is 10 percent, of the first fruits of their labor to support the full-time ministry of the Levites. This is what the Lord gave Moses to teach the people:

“You shall tithe all the yield of your seed that comes from the field year by year. And before the Lord your God, in the place that he will choose, to make his name dwell there, you shall eat the tithe of your grain, of your wine, and of your oil, and the firstborn of your herd and flock, that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always. And if the way is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry the tithe, when the Lord your God blesses you, because the place is too far from you, which the Lord your God chooses, to set his name there, then you shall turn it into money and bind up the money in your hand and go to the place that the Lord your God chooses and spend the money for whatever you desire—oxen or sheep or wine or strong drink, whatever your appetite craves. And you shall eat there before the Lord your God and rejoice, you and your household. And you shall not neglect the Levite who is within your towns, for he has no portion or inheritance with you.”

“At the end of every three years you shall bring out all the tithe of your produce in the same year and lay it up within your towns. And the Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance with you, and the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, who are within your towns, shall come and eat and be filled, that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands that you do.” (Deuteronomy 14:22–29)

This principle of tithing is carried over into the New Testament, though not explicitly by calling it a tithe. St. Paul teaches the Church at Corinth this: We are to give to the church regularly (1 Cor. 16:1–2), proportionally (1 Cor. 16:1–2; 2 Cor. 8:12), and generously (2 Cor. 8:20) of our first fruits (1 Cor. 16:1–2; Gen. 4:4; Prov. 3:9; Lev. 27:30) with a spirit of eagerness (2 Cor. 9:2), earnestness (2 Cor. 8:7), cheerfulness (2 Cor. 9:7), and love (2 Cor. 8:23). And all of this is because the “Lord has ordained that those who preach the Gospel should make their living by the Gospel” (1 Cor. 9:14), just as the Levites did.

This is our New Testament standard. Since Christ became poor for us in order to make us rich in Him – blessing us with the riches of heaven – so we also have been so blessed to follow the example of our Lord and Savior and give of ourselves and the

work of our hands to bless others with the same. If we have been lax in this, let us – like our Lord, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross and scorned its shame – likewise begin to work toward this goal of regular giving of a generous proportion of the first fruits of God’s giving to us. And let us do so not begrudgingly, but for the joy set before us—with a spirit of eagerness, cheerfulness, and love—to share the blessings of God with those placed into our care.



Thank you to all who volunteer on Zion’s Parish Planning Committee and to all of you who serve on our various boards at church. The structure of our congregation puts much of the day-to-day ministries and activities under your care, and we thank God for your faithful service and devotion to your role! Thank you, also, for the service of many volunteers in our congregation, including our treasurers, financial secretaries, directors, and everyone else who contributes so faithfully to our life together at Zion. Your service and your sacrifice are appreciated!

Mission of the Month

Rev. Charles Ferry/ Indonesia Ministry

Rev. Charles and Cheryl Ferry serve on behalf of the LCMS throughout Asia and are based in North Sumatra, Indonesia. As the Asia Regional Director, Charles is responsible for LCMS work, personnel, and relationships in 20 countries. He unites local church leaders and LCMS blessings to strengthen partner churches through theological education, translation, and mercy projects. In addition, Charles provides Word and Sacrament ministry and pastoral care to geographically separated Lutherans. Pray for Charles and Cheryl as they serve in Asia. Pray for their family as they continue to live in Indonesia. Pray they are used daily to lovingly minister to the local people with whom they serve and live. Pray specifically that Charles is spiritually guided as he strives to teach, serve and lead. Let us give thanks that the Ferrys are serving in this part of the world.

Youth / Family Life

Sunday, July 31



Interested in a canoe trip? Those interested will meet at CTK after the 11:00 a.m. service on Sunday, July 31. More details will be in upcoming bulletins or you can call Luke Epple Jr. For more information at 989-944-5426.



In memory of Carolyn Wirgau
Wayne & Karyn Kiefer

Thrivent Choice Dollars

Thank you to all our members who have Thrivent products and who direct Thrivent Choice Dollars our direction. Remember you must direct your dollars every year! Direct your portion of the Thrivent Choice Dollars online or contact 800-847-4836.



*Blessed is the
Nation whose God
is the Lord.*
Psalms 113:1-2

Happy 4th of July!

Guided Reading



A month in 2 Samuel: Last month we read 1 Samuel and this month we press forward. This is more rich history of Israel, and right in the middle of it we find the well known account of David and Bathsheba, of David's sin and God's restoration of David through the proclamation of the Prophet Nathan. Remember that the Lord's has also put away your sins on account of Jesus' death and resurrection.

- 2 Samuel 1 – David Mourns and Laments for Jonathan and Saul
- 2 Samuel 2 – David Anointed King of Judah
- 2 Samuel 3 – David and Abner
- 2 Samuel 4 – Ishbosheth Murdered
- 2 Samuel 5 – David Anointed King of Israel
- 2 Samuel 6 – The Ark Brought to Jerusalem
- 2 Samuel 7 – God's Covenant; David's Prayer
- 2 Samuel 8 – David's Victories
- 2 Samuel 9 – David's Kindness to Mephibosheth
- 2 Samuel 10 – David Defeats Ammon and Syria
- 2 Samuel 11 – David and Bathsheba
- 2 Samuel 12 – Nathan Rebukes David; Solomon Born
- 2 Samuel 13 – Amnon and Tamar; Absalom Flees
- 2 Samuel 14 – Absalom Returns to Jerusalem
- 2 Samuel 15 – Absalom Conspires Against David
- 2 Samuel 16 – David Cursed; Absalom comes to Jerusalem
- 2 Samuel 17 – Hushai Saves David
- 2 Samuel 18 – Absalom's Death; David's Grief
- 2 Samuel 19 – Joab Rebukes David; David Returns; Pardons
- 2 Samuel 20 – Sheba's Rebellion
- 2 Samuel 21 – David Avenges the Gibeonites
- 2 Samuel 22 – David's Song of Deliverance
- 2 Samuel 23 – David's Last Words and his Mighty Man
- 2 Samuel 24 – David's Census; David Builds an Altar

Field of Dreams

As we watch the Boys of Summer, cheering on our favorite baseball teams, I am reminded of the movie Field of Dreams. You'll recall the main character builds a baseball diamond in the middle of his Iowa cornfield after hearing voices. Simply creating the field was not the end of the story. He chases across the country to discover the answer to two important questions. "Why?" and "What happens now?"

During the construction of the baseball field he is questioned, criticized, and ridiculed. He comes close to losing the farm. But he perseveres, confident his efforts will result in something amazing. My favorite scene is after the old-time players finish the game and leave the field. One player remains, his father, as a young man. They play catch and talk, as he relishes the opportunity to spend time with the man he rejected when he was a boy.

We also have the chance to spend time with our Father. Do we make the best use of our opportunities? How much time do we spend in quiet contemplation reflecting on God's Word? Or do our busy schedules make it a challenge to carve out some time each day? But He is always there reaching out to us, ready to spend time and communicate with us.

As parents we take on the task of influencing our children and grandchildren. What we do and say is a living example for them. Praying, having devotions, going to church, spending time with them, and demonstrating our values can make a lifetime of difference. Proverbs 22:6 reminds us, "Train up a child in the way they should go and even when they are old, they will not turn from it."

I recently had the pleasure of taking two of my grandchildren to The Ark Encounter in northern Kentucky. Seeing the reality of Noah's Ark come to life, opened the door to some great conversations. My prayer is, experiencing, reading the stories, and discussing how this biblical account happened, cements the faith that has been nurtured in their young lives.

What impact can you have on the lives of your grandkids, friends, and neighbors? Take the time to share your faith. Demonstrate your faith in how you live your life. It can make a lifetime of difference. We invite you to join with Church Extension Fund to work with us to Build the Kingdom.



Church Extension Fund

Zion Lutheran Women's Guild



My Sheep Hear My Voice – John 10

Michigan District LWML Convention 2022

The convention will be held at Frankenmuth, Michigan, July 7-9. Janah Aldrich and Ann Hayes have volunteered to go as our delegates. We are still looking for a Young Woman's representative. You can attend the worship service for free on Thursday evening at 6:30 p.m. at St. Lorenz Lutheran Church in Frankenmuth.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS – 2022

Bazaar – 2022 A chairperson is needed for our Christmas Bazaar/Craft Show. We also need a chairperson for the Cookie Walk. If you are interested, please contact Kathleen Nims at (989) 294-1373. If chairperson is not found, the bazaar portion may have to be tabled until December 2023.

Women's Bible Study will return in September.

Luncheon – The luncheon on June 18, at the Olive Garden was really good time for all those who attended.

Activities Planning Meeting in July – Our Zion Lutheran Women's Guild Executive Board will be meeting to plan the 2022-2023 Program Calendar. If you have any activities that you would like us to consider, please let us know. Keep an eye on the bulletins and newsletters this fall.

Hostesses - We are looking for volunteers to serve as hostesses at the District Convention. We need 50-60 hostesses. Please contact Kathleen Nims, hostess chair, (989) 294-1373.

MITES: *By the Grace of God, the district is no longer in a shortage situation. We have met our mite goals. But, we continually need to be diligent and give regularly. Do you have pockets of change? Remember our mite box is looking for loose change. These mites are collected for the grants that are funded at each convention. Our goal is over \$360,000.*



What's our 80? The LWML was established in 1942 as an official auxiliary of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. In thankfulness for 80 years, The Lutheran Women's Missionary League, is requesting each member, group, zone and district remember events from the last 80 years, or share legacy concepts for carrying forth the LWML mission. Our own group has adopted for our 80's goal to donate 40 adult coloring books and 40 sets of colored pencils for a dialysis center and CTK. Please keep an eye on bulletins and newsletters for further information.

God Bless you with a wonderful summer!

Who We Are

Have you often wondered who we are and what do we stand for? In the following months, there will be little inserts about LWML. Did you know that because we are an auxiliary of LCMS, you are a member? That means that for this group to function, we invite you to come to our meetings and events. We need you! We want to hear your input.

THE LWML MISSION STATEMENT

As Lutheran Women in Mission, we joyfully proclaim Christ, support missions, and equip women to honor God by serving others.

—Adopted January 2021

“Serve the Lord with Gladness” Psalm 100:2

Regular Quarterly Voters' Meeting

Sunday, July 24

12:15 p.m.



This meeting will take place at CTK in the sanctuary following the 11:00 a.m. service.